

Message Text

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43

ACTION OES-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SMI-01 EB-06 COA-01 INR-07 RSC-01

PASS-00 /033 W

----- 105836

R 041514Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6135

UNCLAS DUBLIN 1564

PASS TO SMITHSONIAN OBSERVATORY, CAMBRIDGE MASS. FOR ROBERT CITRON
FROM AG ATTACHE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, EATR, EI

SUBJ: OIL SPILL IN BANTRY BAY

REF: (A) DUBLIN 1538 (B) SMITHSONIAN TELEGRAM 292120Z OCT 74

1. FERGUS O'GORMAN ABROAD AND FOLLOWING INFORMATION COLLECTED
FROM OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL SOURCES. VOLUMINOUS NEWS CUTTINGS
GIVING BACKGROUND DETAILS FOLLOW BY AIR POUCH.

2. ACCORDING TO GULF OIL COMPANY SOURCES, SPILLAGE CAUSED BY SEA
VALVE 30 FT BELOW SURFACE ON TANKER "UNIVERSE LEADER" ERRONEOUSLY
LEFT OPEN WHILE SHIP LOADING CRUDE OIL DESTINED FOR SPAIN. LOAD-
ING REPORTEDLY COMMENCED 5.30 P.M. LOCAL TIME OCTOBER 21 AND
WAS SUSPENDED 8.30 A.M. NEXT MORNING FOLLOWING APPEARANCE OF OIL
SLICK. DURING THIS TIME VALVE ESTIMATED OPEN SOME 30 MINUTES.
DISCREPANCY OF OVER 2,000 TONS NOTICED BETWEEN TERMINAL AND SHIP
LOADING RECORDS. LOADING FINALLY COMPLETED OCTOBER 24 AND SHIP
THEN SAILED.

3. SHIP LIBERIAN REGISTERED NO. 836 TO UNIVERSE TANKERSHIPS INC.
CAPACITY IS 51,400 GROSS TONS, 35,709 REGISTERED TONNAGE AND
92,373 DEADWEIGHT TONS.

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4. GULF NOW SAY SPILLAGE TOTALS 2,597 TONS (ABOUT 650,000 GALLONS).

AREA SO FAR AFFECTED IS SOME 20 MILES SOUTHERN SHORELINE FROM THE PORT OF GERAHIES TO SHEEP'S HEAD. THIS AREA ACOLOGICALLY RICH BUT FORTUNATELY SOUTH SHORE LEASE IMPORTANT. HOWEVER, NORTHERLY WINDS WHICH TO DATE KEPT SLICK ON SOUTH SHORE NOW VEERED SOUTHWESTERLY, WHICH MAY SPREAD SLICK ACROSS BAY AND ON TH NORTH SHORE. SHOULD THIS HAPPEN, EFFECT ON MARINE LIFE IN BAY AND LOCAL FISHING INTERESTS WOULD BE VERY SERIOUS.

5. MARINE LIFE ON SOUTH SHORE OF BAY NOW VIRTUALLY DESTROYED. FLORA IN AREA SIMILAR TO IBERIAN PENINSULAR. FAUNA IN NORMAL EUROPEAN CROSS SECTION. DEAP WATER SPECIES SO FAR MOSTLY UNAFF-ECTED. COMMERCIAL SPECIES AFFECTED ARE HERRING, PERRYWINKLE, SEA URCHIN AND MUSSEL. HERRING EGGS JUST HATCHING AND EXPERTS THINK IF SLICK IS CLEARED WITHING NEXT 7 DAYS, MUCH OF THESE YOUNG HERRING WILL SURVIVE. GULF SAY INITIAL CLEAN UP HALF COMPLETE AS OF OCTOBER 31 AND IF WEATHER CONDITIONS REMAIN FAVORABLE FURTHER SEVEN DAYS SHOULD SUBSTANTIALLY FINISH JOB. HOWEVER, AGMIN. SCIENTISTS LESS OPTIMISTIC. LIMITING FACTORS ARE AVAILABILITY OF MANPOWER, BOATS AND EQUIPMENT.

6. WARREN SPRINGS LABORATORY TECHNIQUE USED. DETERGENT IS BP 1100 X APPLIED, SO FAR, ONLY ON OPEN WATER. EXPERTS SAY DETERGENT MAY HAVE TO BE USED ON BEACHES ALSO. LARGE QUANTITIES OIL ALSO BEING COLLECTED AND DUMPED INLAND, CAUSING FURTHER PROTESTS THAT INLAND WATERS MAY BE EFFECTED. UNDERWATER T.V. FOLLOWED BY SCUBA DIVER INSPECTION ALSO EMPLOYED AND HATCHABILITY OF HERRING EGGS IN AREA BEING MONITORED.

7. DEPARTMENT OF AGRIC. AND FISH. MONITORING EAM LED BY DR. F.A.H. GIBSON, FISHERIES DIV., CATHAL BRUGHA STREET, DUBLIN 1, TELEPHONE 741121.

8. GOI ARE EXPECTED SET UP A BANTRY HARBOUR AUTHORITY TO REGULATE SHIPPING IN THE AREA, WHICH APPARENTLY TO DATE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY UNCONTROLLED BY GOI.
MOORE

NOTE BY OC/T: PASSED CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

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Message Attributes

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